



Theater, grocery store and up to 40 restaurants planned for Richmond's Hilltop mall

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RICHMOND — New details are emerging about the future of the Shops at Hilltop — formerly the Hilltop Mall — and the site's owners say that over the next 18 months, the shopping center could have a whole new look.

A movie theater, live theater, grocery store, food hall and up to 40 restaurants are part of the plan that executives at LBG Real Estate Companies, LLC, which purchased the site in July, are pursuing, they said at a meeting of Richmond businesses and residents hosted by Mayor Tom Butt on Thursday.

“We plan to make it a mix-use, vibrant type of property,” said Doug Beiswenger of LBG.

While he did not disclose which grocery, theater and restaurants would land in the

space, Beiswenger and his partners, Leslie Lundin and David Goldman, said at the meeting they are in talks with various operators. Goldman, who is in charge of leasing, said he hoped also to put large retailers such as H&M and Forever 21 into the mall.

LBG Real Estate Companies and Aviva Investors closed in July on the purchase of the 1.1 million-square-foot shopping center, which went into foreclosure about four years ago and then to the auction block.

Residents and city officials had long expressed hope that a developer could breathe new life into the mall, which has floundered in recent years with high vacancy and a lack of foot traffic.

A rendering of one of the proposed new entrances into the Hilltop Mall. Renovations are set to commence in the fall of 2019.



A movie theater, live theater, grocery store, food hall, and up to 40 restaurants are part of the plan that executives at LBG Real Estate Companies, LLC, which purchased the Hilltop Mall in Richmond in July, are pursuing as they renovate the shopping center.

The vacancy rate got higher when anchor JCPenney shuttered earlier this year, but the LBG partners said they are purchasing the building from the retailer and hope to replace it with other retailers.

The city had already re-zoned the property to include a mix of office, hotel and retail space as well as 9,670 units of housing. Beiswenger said LBG is working with architects to plan the housing development of the property.

In the meantime, the company is trying to revitalize the center by adding retail tenants and making interior and exterior improvements, including new floors, paint and new store facades. It will begin revamping the parking lot and adding new lighting soon, and it plans to renovate the exterior of the mall building. To address security concerns, the mall will have about 120 new security cameras, as well as a security kiosk.

Lundin, of LBG, said events will also be important for drawing people into the shopping center, including a Halloween event and a “selfies with Santa” day in the winter, where people can come to take photos with Santa for free.

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Butt, who hosted the business event on Thursday, expressed his hope that Hilltop will thrive once again.

“This once-thriving Hilltop Mall has been going downhill,” he said. “But this is the turnaround.”